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IN THE LOVE OF NATURE.

In the Love of Nature



*"To him who in the love of nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language."*



By
✓
Will J. Meredith



SEATTLE
METROPOLITAN PRINTING AND BINDING CO.
1900



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FOREWORD.

I suppose everyone who has ever written anything he thought worth preserving has hoped some time to gather his work into a permanent volume, pleasing to his friends and not unworthy of being handed down to those who have a natural interest in his good name.

In fulfilment of such a hope I have been enabled to collect in this little book some verses, most of which have enjoyed a vagrant existence in magazines and other journals here and there over the country. In their present form I commend them to the continued good will of friends and the indulgence of all honest critics.

W. J. MEREDITH.

Seattle, Nov. 19, 1900.

LATE AFTERNOON IN MAY.

THE dark, cool shadows of the gulch
Are lighted here and there by dogwood stars,
Between the feathery cedar boughs
The western sunlight thrusts its shining bars.

The hazel thickets smell of spring,
Its balmy breath the ceanothus sends
Abroad through all the dusky woods,
The graceful fern above the trillium bends.

The elder's tender blossoms seem
Too fragile e'en the soft winds to endure,
Which, wandering through fir needles, sing
A slumberous song, their fragrance forth to lure.

The salmon-berry's tinted flower,
The salal's glossy leaf and dainty bell,
The pink, wild currant 'gainst the green,
The vernal spirit's wakening power tell.

The love-lorn dusky grouse o'erhead
At intervals to anguished sobs gives way,
Because his fickle lady love
No prayer will grant, nor fond command obey.

Beside his spouse the jaunty quail,
A woodland courtier, walks with mincing gait;
The hoodlum blue-jay's raucous jeer
Abashes not the gallant nor his mate.

The cool approach of evening
Subdues all sounds: the shadows grow apace:
The rhododendron in the dusk
A deeper blush takes on her lovely face.

The sleepy twittering of the birds
That seek a sheltered perch in some dark nook
Alone the gathering silence breaks,
Save faint and low the tinkle of the brook.

AFTERNOON IN AUTUMN.

THERE is no motion in the air,
And far away the hazy hills
Withdraw into the purple depths
Of distance: drowsily the rills
Creep muffled by the fallen leaves:
The withered fern with russet stains
The tender green of meadow grass
Washed pale by early Autumn rains.

The sunshine's benediction lies
Abroad, too soon among the leaves
To be a rare and wished-for guest,
When drizzling skies and dripping eaves
And moisture-laden boughs oppress
The soul out-doors and we retire
To hearthsides where the treasured sun
Of past years is released by fire.

The last hoar dandelion droops,
The far-flung cobwebs splendid shine,
Against the gray-green willow glows
The crimson of the blackberry vine.
A long stemmed clover blossom nods
A farewell to the parting bee
Home bound from nectar laden blooms,
The prey of his sweet piracy.

The maples' gold and scarlet flush
Shows mellow through the softening haze:
The myriad midges' silver wings
A moment glisten in the rays
Of yon slow sinking sun whose light
Beyond the mountains in the west
Must soon be quenched, then silently
The kindly night will come, and rest.

THE SETTING SUN.

HE gazed with soul drowned in remorse
For by-gone deeds he dared not tell:
It glowed a bloody tragedy
Mid lurid flames of Hell.

She gazed while tender memories
Suffused with tears her happy eyes:
It gleamed a golden glory o'er
The gates of Paradise.

THE NATURE CALL.

THE longing stirs within me strong
To dig and delve in Spring;
The thought of breast-high waving corn
Or smell of fresh green grass,
The odor of rain-sprinkled soil
Or sodden Autumn leaves,
Has power to move me so that I
Am like a creature caged.

Then comes a restless discontent
That, though I love my books,
Still drives me forth o'er fields afar
Or through the solemn woods,
Till steeped in nature I return
My homeward way and seek
My couch in happy, calm fatigue,—
That is not like the faint

And heart-sick weariness that holds
The city man from sleep,
But tranquil mind and tired limbs
That sink to rest as sweet
As when the satiated babe
Lays its mother's breast
And in her sheltering arms content
It shuts its eyes in sleep.

THE BONFIRE ON THE BEACH.

CHEERILY blazed the driftwood fire
In the hollow of the drifted sand;
Around it sat, chance-gathered there
From widely sundered homes a band

Of jovial spirits met to pass
An hour in social merriment;
The encroaching darkness 'round them closed
It's curtains like an ebon tent.

The kindly jest, the joyous laugh,
The ballad and the chorus strong,
Each other followed merrily,
And then again the tale and song.

The pungent odor of the smoke,
The chilly night wind as it blew,
But gave to all a keener zest
And closer still the circle drew.

The simple cheer, the homely food,
 Rudely prepared and eaten then
Seemed epicurian luxuries
 Beyond the usual fare of men—

A banquet board and hearthstone bright
 To those who strangers heretofore
In broken bread and open heart
 Found friendship on that wreck-strewn shore.

And old time friends grew dearer still
 As passed the happy hour away
Beside the roaring seas that stretch
 To far Cipango and Cathay.

A JANUARY NIGHT.

THERE came a clear and starry time,
With southern breezes blowing,
When through the warm, night-scented air
Stole sounds of water flowing.

The new year seemed, methought, all things
With sweet new life pervading;
To saner joys and nobler faiths
Humanity persuading.

The night was music to my soul,
Sweet calm my spirit bringing,
As to the heavy heart of Saul
Came peace with David's singing.

Then suddenly a minstrel tuned
His harp and fell to chanting
A song my long-lost boyhood knew,
It seemed the one thing wanting

To take me back to youth again,—
How swift the years fly o'er us!—
When far away, 'neath spring time stars
I heard the frogs' glad chorus.

DECEMBER DAWN AT FALL CITY.

RED roan the thin clouds float o'erhead,
The keen air stirs the blood like wine,
Frost-bound the earth on which I tread,
The morning stars still brightly shine.

The east is kindling with the dawn
The tender skies translucent glow,
Blue-black are mountain shadows drawn
Where last night gleamed the moonlit snow,

The dark woods stretch on every hand,
The road side grass is white with frost,
The alders in the thickets stand
Like spectral trees, betrayed and lost.

And all the while a distant roar
That all the narrow valley fills
Seems ever growing more and more—
Snoqualmie's thunders shake the hills.

Who could describe the scene and hour?
"Oh wad some power the giftie giel!"
Not to increase my vision's power,
But to express the things I see!

THE COMING OF THE SNOW.

THE sombre earth in silence lies,
A subtle chill pervades the air,
The burden of the leaden skies
Is settling doubtful here and there.

The morning sunshine and the sheen
On white Olympic peaks at noon,
The gorgeous sunset yestere'en,
Are all forgotten now, and soon

The green of sward and forest pine
Will fade beneath the fall of snow
That while we watch is line by line
Effacing everything we know.

Effacing !—Nay, transfiguring !
Each scar and blemish of the years,
Each trace of old Earth's suffering
Grows faint and dim and disappears.

THE SILVER LINING.

BUT yesterday the waters lay
So still it seemed the lake was sleeping;
Today, as if beneath the sway
Of demons, crested waves are leaping.

An hour ago the winds that blow
Were hushed and not a sound or quiver
Betrayed the stealthy creeping shade
That saddens field and wood and river.

The rustling weeds and swaying reeds
That with the winds and waters wrangled,
All torn and bent and over borne,
Are drifting hopelessly entangled.

The sunny nooks beside the brooks
Where yesterday the flowers were blooming,
Sad fate, are now all desolate
With sullen shadows o'er them glooming.

Heart, do not fear, sunshine is near,
Not long will linger shade or sadness,
Good cheer will conquer, sigh and tear
Must soon give way to song and gladness.

SUNRISE ON LAKE UNION.

THE sweet scents of the silent dawn
Pervade the dewy atmosphere;
Faint, bluish-white, a pyramid
Of glacial ice, looms far Rainier.

Thin shreds of fog, wreckage of clouds,
Cling to the borders of the lake,
Still, oily-smooth its waters lie,
Not e'en the fish a ripple make.

A cock crows and the thickets wake
With twitter of the morning bird,
The lake's calm bosom still asleep
By the waking breeze is gently stirred.

The eastern windows of the town
All dark before begin to blaze,
The mountain top with creamy light
Suffused, proclaims the king of days.

So is our childish ignorance,
Our credulous, unthinking youth,
Awakened all and glorified
By some great sunburst of the Truth.

GREEN LAKE.

NO more the forest giants fling their shade
Athwart the placid mirror of thy breast,
No more the timid wild deer comes to drink
And lie down on thy quiet shores to rest.

The sunlight and the starlight fall on thee
Uninterrupted by the leafy screen
Which anciently kind Nature interposed
To shield thy limpid waters cool and green.

The cedar and the fir have passed away,
Save here and there a sorry trace of those
Whose lordly forms once towered above thy shores
Where now the upstart sapling alder grows.

But where dark thickets grew in days ago
And brooding owls at noonday dolorous moaned,
Bloom gardens and the bee-sought clover fields
And sweet **Sturnella*'s song is there intoned.

The tender mists of morning veil thy reeds,
The sinking sun thy lilies turns to gold,
Above thy pebbles roll the little waves
And over thee the blue bends as of old.

* *Sturnella magna*—the meadow-lark.

THE SETTLER.

I PASSED the little cedar cot his hand
Had reared unaided in the forest dim;
I saw him swing his shining ax aloft
And heard the neighboring hillside answer him;
The measured echo of his falling blade
A pleasant native woodland music made.

Yes, native as the querulous squirrel's call
Or bluejay's challenge from the thicket dense,
Or cheery fluting of the meadow lark
Above his nest hid near the garden fence;
And, sweet as any feathered songster's cry,
I heard the housewife's tender lullaby.

From many a log heap near the little cot
The purple smoke rose straight into the air;
'Twas incense from an altar built to faith
And tended morn and night with jealous care,—
An altar where the forest sacrifice
Consumed itself before the settler's eyes.

And where is there sublimer faith than his

Who toils and suffers that approaching age
May find him sheltered from the pinching frost

Of want dependent, bitter patronage,—
Who sweats and strives and slowly, slowly frees
The soil that he and his may live at ease?

He lifts sometimes his toil-grimed face to view

The splendor of the sunset or the dawn,
The white sublimity of skyward peaks,

Or veil mysterious o'er the mountain drawn,
And feels, it may be, longings now and then
To mingle in the wider world of men.

But when he views his slowly widening fields,

His children's home, no more his bosom burns,
He gratefully gives thanks his arm is strong,

And with content to toil again returns;
E'en when he hears the twilight supper horn
Reluctantly he leaves his work till morn.

O, will Injustice have her tribute still
 When this bent toiler feeble grows and grey?
Must he still slave to give her silken sons
 And lily-handed daughters holiday?
Or shall he see the Day we've prayed for long
When Brotherhood shall banish want and wrong?

TO AN INDIAN CANOE.

THOU slender ark beside the brink
Of waiting waters idly lying,
Where languid lilies the sunshine drink
And loitering waves are softly dying,
What canst thou teach me, say, what word of strength
Or wisdom lies in thy three fathoms' length?

No clumsy builded skiff art thou,
No short-lived shell of birchbark fragile,
But staunch and strong from stern to prow
Life-long thou'lt bear thy master agile
Safe o'er the boiling rapids, tumbling seas,
Or placid lake unruffled by the breeze.

No Arab steed on desert sand,
With all his master's fond devotion,
Is more responsive to the hand
Than thou art to the slightest motion
As thy bold master dips his glistening oar
On either side along the reedy shore.

As lightly as the waterfowl

 The gently heaving wave thou ridest,
As noiselessly as flight of owl,

 Or otter, from the bank thou glidest,
Thou and thy master one, thy ripply wake
Scarcely discerned a furlong on the lake.

How many moons stoodst thou a king,

 A noble cedar tree, uprearing
Thy plumed head o'er everything
 Around thee, naught of evil fearing,
Until that doleful night when tempests flung
Thee crashing down the humbler folk among?

How long the prostrate monarch lay,

 A log, bereft of pride and glory,
Until thy sculptor passed that way,
 There's none to tell the piteous story;
But from that prison what joy his must have been
To free thy graceful form immured therein!

Ambition reared thy head on high,
Then swiftly came thy dread disaster;
Thou scarce couldst brook the o'ershadowing sky,
Yet now thou servest as thy master
Him thou hadst scorned but that his hand set free
Thy nobler self,—and thus thou teachest me.

IN THE MINERS' CEMETERY.

ONCE on a lowering afternoon
When sullen winds blew dismally
Through autumn-stricken woods, and fast
The dead leaves fell from every tree,

I passed a lonely burial ground,
Rudely enclosed and desolate
As those fond hearts whose buried dead
Such grewsome places consecrate.

In reverently curious mood,
Seeking to know whose ashes lay
In that deserted spot, I cleared
The rubbish from a stone away.

It was a simple headstone hid
In bramble-grown obscurity,
And bore for epitaph one line:
"A native son of Italy."

There on that dreary mountain side,
Forgotten, under leaden skies,
Far from his sunlit childhood home,
At last the weary wanderer lies.

No doubt his latest thought in life
Was of that land he loved so well,
And kindred hearts above his dust
That stone had reared his thought to tell.

So, when I die, and under ground
My battered, earth-worn body lies,
May some kind friends remember me:
"A native of Beyond the Skies."

LINES WITH AN ETCHING.

AS only He who made the rose
Could paint that flower's hue,
And only He who made the sky
Could give its wondrous blue,
So all that man has thought and done,
And all that he can do,
Fails of the splendor of the sun,
The blossom's beauty too.

The etching then weak man designed
The landscape's charm to express,
And image to his brother's mind
Its varied loveliness,—
Devoid of color, to be sure,
With only light and shade
All form and color to secure,—
The charm so swift to fade.

Yet still it seems more reverent
 Than all the gaudy paint
With which barbaric man attempts
 To imitate the faint
And evanescent charms that cling—
 The subtle tint and shade—
To e'en the simplest little thing
 The Father's hand has made.

Dear friends, this simple homelike scene,
 This cottage by the sea,
Has golden sunlight, herbage green,
 Blue sky and breezes free;
And though the reverent artist's hand
 Has not assayed to show
The color-glories of the land
 And sea, they're there we know.

So may your lives, without pretence
Or vain and idle show,
Give to congenial friends a sense
Of inward golden glow,—
Of beauties that no mortal eyes
May ever hope to see—
To help us all to realize
What Heaven is to be.

WHEN STELLA PLAYS.

HER fingers touch the instrument,
But ere a sound you hear
A hundred sprightly minstrel elves
In quaintest garb appear.

Rich, silken robes and nodding plumes
Each minstrel brave adorn;
Each bears a pipe, a silver drum,
Or mellow throated horn.

To right and left they file and pause
Awaiting her behest,
And eagerly they strive each one
To please and serve her best.

Two sturdy drummers from the left
Step blithely forth and stand,
While from the right three pipers gay
Advance at her command.

Each sounds a single note and then
 Awaits impatiently
While others take his place and join
 The elfin melody.

Now faster beat the kettle drums
 And high the pipes and shrill,
Then slowly, softly breathe the horns
 And all the rest are still.

Now sweet and clear the pipes again
 And soft the drummers play,
Then one by one and silently
 The minstrels file away.

A WINTER MORNING.

THE thin film of ice on the marshland
Shows the drowned green things below,
And the reeds and grasses above it
Are bending with frost as with snow.

The shag-coated horses are browsing
Half-hearted there under the hill,
And the cattle among the bare willows
Stand shrunken, dejected and still.

All silent and dark flows the river,
Flows swiftly with never a wave,
As from caverns of fog it emerges
To be lost in a vapory cave.

The fog-laden air of the morning
Is chill as a sepulchre's breath,
And seems to close narrowing 'round us
Like the walls of the chamber of death.

But lo! through the murk that engulfs us
Faint glimmerings of yellow light strain,
And soon all the glory of sunshine
Will flood earth and heaven again.

PORT OF THE ANGELS.

1592.

FROM out the vast Pacific, where
The endless billows roll,
The storm-chased Spanish carvel fled
As from a fiend's control,
With broken mast and tattered sail
And terror in each soul.

The holy saints to every prayer
Were deaf, the stranger sea
Where never ship had sailed before
All lifeless seemed to be,
And all around the ghostly mists
Kept shifting eerily.

Rain-drenched, wave-washed, the life boats stove,
The bulwarks crushed and gone,
The hull aleak, 'neath hidden skies
They floundered on and on
Till hope was dead and dull despair
O'erspread each visage wan.

Past frowning capes and foam-veiled rocks

Toward certain wreck they swept;

Fear-maddened by the awful dread

The seamen cursed and wept;

And ever at each elbow, Death

His changeless station kept.

Then straight ahead a snowy line

Of breakers barred the way,

And straight ahead the vessel drove

To where Destruction lay

In wait to seize each shrinking soul

How e'er he shriek and pray.

But ere the staggering bark could strike

She felt a current strong

That seized her keel resistlessly

And hurried her along

Into a port, safe as a lake,

That hides the hills among.

“A miracle!” the astonished crew
In grateful wonder cry;
“The holy angels to our aid!”
And turned is every eye
Where sunshine gilds the snowy peaks—
A stairway from the sky.

NOTE.—In the Strait of Juan de Fuca, said to have been discovered in 1592, two leagues of sandspit shelter the magnificent harbor of Pt. Angeles, overlooked by Mt. Angeles, a snow-covered summit often bathed in sunshine when all around is wrapped in obscuring mist.

AFTER KLOPSTOCK'S MESSIAS.

METHOUGHT two mighty hosts innumerable
Upon the wasted marches of a realm
War-scourged and ruined fought, and as the din
And clamor died away there rose a cloud
Of parting spirits from the corse-strewn field.
High in the heavens the Awful One reviewed
The ghostly throng and meted judgment out.
A peal of thunder, and the captains' souls
To endless punishment were hurled, and when
The hollow rumbling ceased, from Hell arose
Wild shrieks and cursings and the whistling sound
Of scourges as the soldier-spirits fell
Upon their former lords in chastisement,—
Wailings and hopeless groans and utter night.

* * *

And then, methought, seraphic sound of harps
And melody of birdsongs from the earth
Stole on mine ear, and through the sunlight flew
A joyous troupe of infant spirits freed
From flesh and tyranny of low desires.
The Holy One with face benignant smiled
And judged them not but blessed the radiant band
As past His throne they swept to shine and sing
For ever more among the morning stars.

WHO IS A POET?

HAVE you an ear
So delicate and fine
That you can hear
The breezeless whisper of the pine?
Is there for you
In song of meadow-lark one note,
Heard by the Few,
Rich, sweet and reedy when his throat
In morning hymn
Swells with seraphic bliss? Do sky
And forest dim
And moss-grown rocks enthrall your eye?
And does the sight
Of bursting buds and clinging clouds
On mountain height—
Do crag-born tempests shrieking loud,
Or Springtime's breath,
Or white-capped waves a pleasure bring
As keen as death
So you could weep for joy or sing?
Do wrongs and scorn
Of other hearts oppress your own?
Bard were you born
And from your brow the poet's crown
Can ne'er be torn.

THE POET'S CROWN.

THE poet's crown is laurel, aye, and thorn:
The laurel is for fame, the artist's meed,
The tribute paid by happy men who read
And listen for the joy of it, whom scorn
And cruel wrong and want and hope deferred
Have never left their branded scars upon;
Beneath the coronet of laurel won
From willing hands and hearts by pleasure stirred,
There is a hidden, thorny wreath that he
Who has the gift of song, the seeing eye,
Has fashioned for himself and till he die
Still must he wear it; he can never free
His lacerated temples from that crown
Till every wronged and suffering son of man,
Till every victim of the oppressor's ban,
Has been avenged, has thrown his burden down.

TO AN OLD LADY'S LIPS.

O H wrinkled lips grown cold and colorless,
I wonder much
If you recall in years agone
The tender touch
Of parent fond or dear departing friend,—
If memory
Bring back the long, sweet kiss of early love,
The ecstasy
Of bliss consummate when the brimming tide
Of Youth's deep sea
Rose to it's full and overflowed you quite.
The honey bee
Ne'er robbed a sweeter blossom in the field
Than ye were then;
No lure, I wist, more strongly moved than ye
The sons of men.
So withered, pale and pitiful today,
It cannot be
That ye remember aught of those old days
Of witchery
When Life's rich flood of crimson flowed amain
From breast to brow.
Ah me! ye only move in holy prayers
And blessings now.

TO THE MEADOW LARK.

SWEET voice of pleasant meadow lands,
Of clover fields and sunny days,
To thee, campestral laureate,
I'd sing a song of praise.

I think no lay of nightengale
In moonlit bowers of roses hidden,
No springtime call of cuckoo-bird,
Could match thy song unbidden.

I have not heard the rhapsody
Of southern mockingbird, nor yet
The pæan of the bobolink,
The linnet's canzonet,

But I have heard the hedgerow thrush
 Above his nest in spring, elate,
And blackbirds in the reedy marsh
 Their bird-joys celebrate,

And many another; but not one
 I've listened to could e'er express
For me so well as thou hast done
 A heart-filled happiness.

No pining for forbidden joys,
 No envious carping, jealousy,
Or vain regret makes harsh thy song,
 Thy joyous melody.

“Sweet, sweet, oh life is sweet, is sweet!”

You carol morn and night and noon.

“The day is long with happiness,

The dark night passes soon;

“The world is full of purest bliss,

The meadow grass is fresh with dew,

Oh life is sweet, is sweet, is sweet,

The sky above is blue;

“No clouds, nor rain, nor March winds chill,

No autumn frost nor summer heat

Can long endure; the sun shines bright,

And life is sweet, is sweet!”

SUNSET.

SWEETHEART, tonight I saw the sun
Through amethystine vapors set;
The full tide lapped the yellow sand
Insistent as a vain regret.

Above the stranded driftwood rose
The fir-embattled hillsides green;
A filmy magic curtain seemed
The neighboring island shores to screen.

The steady landbreeze, fragrance fraught,
From out the forest sought the sea,
And seemed on silent wings to bear
All care and sorrow far from me,

Against the flaming sunset sky
The Olympics' serried summits lay,
A jagged purple sword edge huge,
Broken and notched in desperate fray.

The little yellow beach flowers closed,
All things grew dusk and passed from sight
As paled the roseate clouds o'erhead
Before the miracle of night.

The beauty of that perfect hour
O'erflowed my soul; I thought of thee:
Nothing I lacked, sweetheart, but thy
Hand touch of silent sympathy.

TO SEATTLE.

AS Tyre and Sidon long ago their navies sent afar
To conquer and to colonize and hold in peace and war
The margin of the Mid-World Sea; as Carthage ruled the
wave;

As Athens sent her Wooden Walls from Persia's power to
save

Her people and their liberties; as Rome in later time,
And Venice, sent their merchantmen to trade in every clime,
So thou, Queen City of the West, that sittest by the sea,
Send out thy fleets and bind the world in tribute unto thee.

As Thebes, Memphis, Nineveh, the ancient nations taught;
As Athens, Rome, Byzantium, the kindling spirit caught;
As Egypt's Alexandria the rendezvous became
Of students and of learned men, of all who bore the name
Of seekers after truth, so thou thy University,
Thy schools and colleges upbuild, O city by the sea,
Till of the western continent the center thou shalt be,—
Thy fame reach all Truth's followers and draw them unto thee.

Oh Naples, for her lovely bay, no lovelier than thine,
Geneva, for her mountain view, and is not yours as fine?
Her lake, and thou hast also lakes, are famous: Erin's isle
Is noted for its verdant hills; thy hills with verdure smile,
And when the sun in springtime shines, the blue Italian skies,
Are not more softly blue than those that greet thy children's
eyes.

So, with thy commerce, golden mines, thy schools, thy
scenery,
Grow rich, grow wise, grow great, until all earth shall honor
thee.

L. of C.

SONNETS

WHY SHOULD I PAUSE TO ANSWER?

WHY should I pause to answer, if a few
Small men in envy or in malice try
To minimize, obstruct or nullify
The most unselfish work I try to do,—
Misunderstand and still refuse to view
With favor anything with which my name
Has been connected, though not any blame
Have I deserved, nor even sought my due?

What I have done was not for praise of men.
Then let me not be moved by taunt or jeer
Or censure, if my actions now and then,
My words or thoughts, expressed by tongue or pen,
Someone offend. O, let me never fear
If only right and just I in God's eyes appear!

TO PAUL KRUGER.

Oct. 31, 1899.

STERN Patriot, in whose hand the destiny
Of thy brave people's hard-won freedom lies,
Stand firm; the free with sympathizing eyes
The whole world over now are watching thee.
Be not dismayed; strike home for liberty;
Drive back the fell invaders who but seek
To spoil the succorless, oppress the weak,
With cant of progress, prate of equity!

The adventurer upon whose head the blame
Shall rest for Transvaal's woes, whose base design
Has dimmed his country's glory and to shame
Betrayed her mighty power, his hated name
In future years shall be accursed, but thine,
E'en though thou fall, among the stars shall shine.

PER LACRIMAS.

GREAT Architect and Ruler of this world,
Aye, of the heavens and all their shining spheres,
Thy glorious works we dimly see through tears.
Presumptuous angels down from heaven hurled
Confessed thy power as doomward still they whirled,
So we before thy might resign our pride—
Lay all our impious, rebel thoughts aside;
Our crowns and armor doffed, our banners furled,
We war no more for self but meekly bow
And worship silently; the Heavens o'erhead,
The wondrously created earth, the Now,
The Past, the Future, living things and dead,
Display thy wisdom, thy stupendous might
Subdues our souls and tears bedim our sight.

TO CLINTON SCOLLARD.

BLITHE wanderer 'mongst the pleasant Hills of Song,
Brave troubadour of sun and summer day,
Nor haste nor sorrow overcasts thy lay;
Thy lot hath been most pleasant, naught of wrong
Or want or grief or hope deferred too long
Hath wrung thy heart; no bird upon the bough
A note more wholly care-free sings than thou,
As far thou strayest from the madding throng.

What if thy tuneful verses lack the deep
Heart-moving sympathy of him who sings
Of nature's sterner moods and human woe?
I would not have thee otherwise; O keep
Thy sunlit face unclouded and thy wings
As free as Psyche's own when springtime blossoms blow!

TO WHITTIER.

OF all the saintly calendar of men
Revered and worshiped through the ages, none
A holier life has lived or labor done
Than thou; thine early consecrated pen
Wrought mightily for freedom; later, when
The cause thou strovest for so long was won,
Thine old-time love of nature, sea and sun,
And all that comes within the wondrous ken
Of boyhood, reassumed its wonted reign;
The fellow-feeling for the toiler's lot,
The life of him who eats the bread he earns;
The love of fireside friends that live again
In poesy; nor was there lost one jot
Of tolerance to link thy fame with Burns.

TO JOAQUIN MILLER.

GREY master, eagle spirit of the heights,
We younger, humbler craftsmen offer thee
Appreciation, praise and sympathy.

Afar thou art above the petty spites,
The feuds, the jealousies, the wanton slights,
The myriad pigmy pin-thrusts that infest
The lives of lesser singers; thou art blest
At last with freedom large and all delights

Of fame secure and immortality
Unquestioned; as an ancient Druid bard
Thou sittest on thy mountain throne above
The throng, and harp in hand of minstrelsy
Discoursest,—not of heroes battle-scarred,
But nature's beauties, simple faith and love.

TO JOHN B. TABB, THE POET PRIEST.

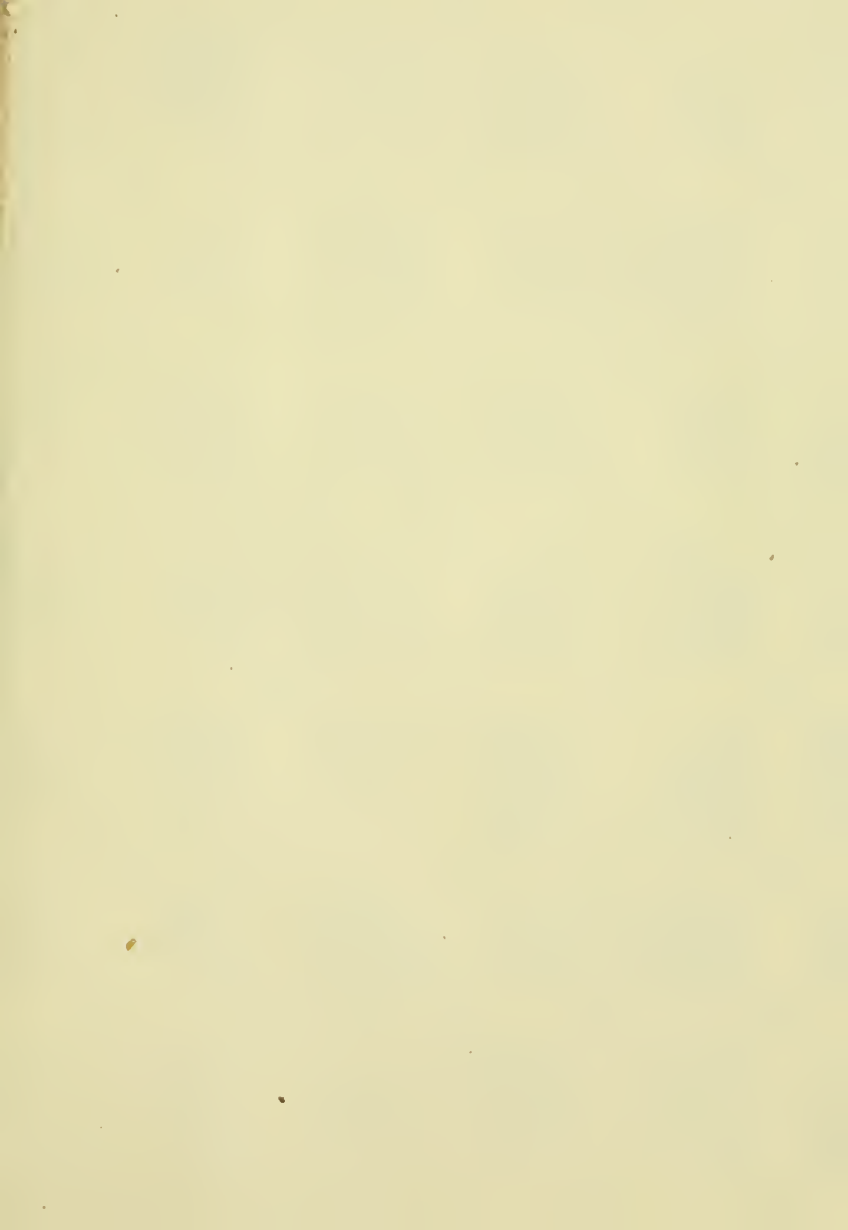
O GENTLE spirit wed to holiness
And vowed eternally to brotherhood,
How art thou moved by beauty and the good!
How much of highest human happiness
Has been thy portion! Surely none the less
Because in youth thy footsteps turned aside
Into the calmer walks and shades that hide
The quiet-loving soul from our world's storm and stress.

Thy life of cloistered peace and piety,
Thy sympathetic heart and poet's eye,
Thine ear attuned to all the harmonies
Of wood and field and sky, of land and sea,
Much more avail to cheer and sanctify
The common lot than all our pageantries.

TO HER I LOVE.

MY one sure anchor, holding safe to land
This storm-tossed craft I call my soul,
Though self-distrust in billows o'er me roll,—
In every joy, in every grief, you stand
Close by my side, my comrade, hand in hand.
My best support when most support I need,
My friend of friends, your love a bond indeed,
Secure when other ties seem ropes of sand.

I am not strong except as you are strong;
Without your aid I falter in the strife;
Without your counsel all my plans go wrong;
The day without delight, the night time lone and long;
Devoid of meaning, flat and stale my life
Without your love and presence, dear, my wife!







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